

PARENT GUIDE



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2010-11

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A product of Destination ImagiNation, Inc., a 501c3 non-profit organization.

Welcome to Destination ImagiNation!

Destination ImagiNation is a experience after-school activity like no other. Over the course of this season, your child's team will work to solve one of our *Team Challenges* and practice and solve any number of *Instant Challenges*. By solving Challenges, they will also gain experience in creative problem solving—a powerful process based on more than 50 years of research that can transform the way that children approach problems for the rest of their lives.

This guide is designed to help you understand the program and what your child will be doing during each stage of the DI season. You will see what you can do, within the rules, to help your child and his or her team have a happy and rewarding experience on a DI team. Please remember that the process is more important than any tangible item the team may create: the journey is more important than the end result. Over the course of the season, your child's team may experience moments of laughter, struggle, brilliance, failure and success. You will have the opportunity to share those moments with your child, but ultimately, the sum of those moments is the team's alone.

As a parent, please understand that Destination ImagiNation participants must experience the program in their own way. By stepping aside and refraining from Interference, you will give your child's team the opportunity to take ownership of its Challenge solutions. That ownership is a vital element of the Destination ImagiNation journey. It allows participants to learn lifelong lessons through experience, which will affect each participant in an individual, memorable and meaningful way.

Destination ImagiNation (DI) Cheat Sheet

Who

DI features teams of up to 7 participants each. Our participants range in age from Kindergarteners through University-level students. Each team needs an adult Team Manager.

What

Teams develop solutions to DI *Team Challenges* and *Instant Challenges*. They present their solutions at Tournaments.

When

Each season takes place from September through May. Teams typically spend three months developing their *Team Challenge* solutions and practicing *Instant Challenges*.

Where

Teams practice wherever they can find space, so they practice in living rooms, garages, classrooms and similar locations! Tournaments typically take place in local schools.

Why

Teams participate to have fun and meet new friends! Additionally, teams also learn and experience creative problem solving.

How

You can use this guide to understand what your child will be doing in DI, and should you need any help, you can contact DI headquarters at askDI@dihq.org or 856.881.1603.



Educational Goals of the Program

Destination ImagiNation is an educational activity in which students work in teams to solve open-ended Challenges and present their solutions at Tournaments. Teams are tested to think on their feet, work together and devise original solutions that satisfy the requirements of the Challenges. Participants gain more than just basic knowledge and skills—they learn to unleash their imaginations and take unique approaches to problem solving. The goals of Destination ImagiNation are for participants to:

Goals

- Foster creative and critical thinking.
- Learn and apply creative problem solving methods and tools.
- Develop teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills.
- Nurture research and inquiry skills, involving both creative exploration and attention to detail.
- Enhance and apply written and verbal communication and presentation skills (both impromptu and sustained).
- Promote the recognition, use, and development of many and varied strengths and talents.
- Encourage competence in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to real-life problem solving.

Methods

- Young people of similar age work on teams of up to 7 members over an 8-12 week period.
- No Interference is allowed from anyone outside of the team.
- Adult Team Managers act as facilitators to a team.
- Experienced trainers in all Affiliates provide Team Manager training.
- Problem solving skills are cultivated by using tools.
- Open-ended *Team* and *Instant Challenges* appreciate creativity.
- Individual and team strengths are promoted by *Side Trips*, based on Multiple Intelligence Theory.
- *Instant Challenges* engage participants in rapid-fire critical thinking.
- *Team Challenges* engage participants in sustained problem solving.

Assessment

- Tournaments are a celebration of what the team has accomplished and the process learned.
- Solutions are evaluated, and Reward Points are a component of *Team* and *Instant Challenges*.
- Appraisers are trained to reward the process that the team has experienced.
- *Tournament Data Forms* provide opportunity for teams to culminate their experience.
- Special Awards are given for exceptional creativity, teamwork and innovation.
- At the end of the Destination ImagiNation season, teams have an active reflection time.

The Two Components of the DI Program

The Destination ImagiNation program asks teams to creatively solve two different kinds of Challenges, each with its own purpose and educational focus. The two Challenges, or components, are called the *Team Challenge* and the *Instant Challenge*. Teams present their solutions to both Challenges at a Tournament where the solutions are evaluated by friendly people we call “Appraisers.”

Team Challenge

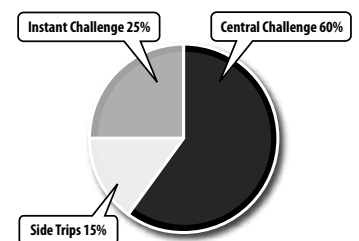
The Destination ImagiNation *Team Challenge* is a Challenge teams work on over a long period of time, usually several months. This year, Destination ImagiNation presents seven *Team Challenges* (six competitive Challenges, and one Rising Stars!® noncompetitive Challenge). Each team generally chooses one Challenge to solve. The *Team Challenge* is made up of two parts, the **Central Challenge** and **Side Trips** (except for a yearly Improvisational Challenge, which does not include *Side Trips*).

Central Challenge

- Purpose: Encourages development of creative problem solving techniques, teamwork and creative process over a sustained period of time (usually several months).
- Educational Focus of *Central Challenge*: The project undertaken by the team is academically based and focuses on one or more of the following areas: Technical, Structural, Scientific, Fine Arts, Community Service, and Improvisational.
- Each of the six competitive *Central Challenges* involves a research component.
- One or more of the *Central Challenges* involves an improvisational component.
- One or more of the *Central Challenges* involves an international and/or intercultural theme.

Side Trips

- Purpose: Encourages participants to discover and showcase their collective interests, strengths, and abilities as a team and as individuals, and allows them to develop that showcase over a long period of time.
- Educational Focus of *Side Trips*: Based on the educational theory of multiple intelligences, which in part emphasizes allowing participants to find their own best ways to present what they have learned.
- Allows teams total freedom to develop elements of their own choosing.
- Allows teams to highlight areas of strength that are not brought forth in the *Central Challenge* requirements.
- Allows and encourages teams to recognize and make the most of each individual’s abilities/interests.





It is very important that every team member attends each team meeting. Be sure to have a calendar for the DI season.

Instant Challenge

The Destination ImagiNation *Instant Challenge* is a Challenge that teams are asked to solve in a very short period of time at their Tournament, without knowing ahead of time what the Challenge will be.

- Purpose: To put the team's creative problem solving abilities, creativity, and teamwork to the test in a short, time-driven Challenge.
- Educational Focus of *Instant Challenge*: The team's use of creative problem solving strategies, teamwork, and the assessment and use of available materials under tight time constraints.
- Encourages teams to develop creative problem solving and time management strategies, performance and improvisational techniques.
- Develops the ability to quickly assess the properties of provided materials, and learn how to creatively manipulate materials for a unique solution.

The DI Equation: See how it all adds up!

TEAM CHALLENGE:

Central Challenge:

Academically-based; process-driven project emphasizing teamwork, creative problem solving, creativity, improvisation; sustained development time

Side Trips:

Based on multiple intelligence theory; allows teams total creative freedom to showcase additional strengths; sustained development time

+ INSTANT CHALLENGE:

Development of an impromptu solution under tight time constraints; showcases teamwork, creative problem solving techniques, performance, and creative use of materials; time management

= Destination ImagiNation

Creativity, Teamwork, Problem Solving

The DI Season

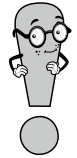
DI Team Challenges are designed to be solved in a period of eight to twelve weeks. Depending on the team and the complexity of the solution they decide to create, they may need more or less time than that.

Your child's team will go through five Process "Stages" as they work their way through the Challenge and compete at the Tournament. You can support your child at every step of the process in many different ways.

Stage	1				2				3				4				5
Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	2-4 Weeks Building your Team /Understanding the Challenge				2-4 Weeks Generating and Incubating Ideas / Research / Inquiry				2-4 Weeks Focusing / Preparing for Action / Putting It All Together				2-4 Weeks Ready, Set, Go! Preparing for your Tournament				CELEBRATE!

Keep in mind problem solving is a messy and somewhat unpredictable business! Stages may overlap, sometimes a team may return to an earlier stage, and often, stages will transition without a clear end to one and start of another. Assure your child that long as the team is generally moving forward toward the solution, everything will be all right!

There are many ways to support your child's DI experience.



Remember to answer all questions with questions and never offer ideas or solutions to the *Team Challenge*.



Now is a great time for you to get familiar with the *Team Challenge* that your child's team has selected.



Stage 1: Building the Team & Understanding the Challenge

Your child's team will:

- Learn about creative problem solving.
- Learn to work as a team.
- Choose a Challenge.
- Read the Challenge.
- Create a set of Team Ground Rules.
- Learn about and understand Interference.
- Do *Side Trips Specialties Inventory*; talk about team's collective and individual strengths.
- Try some *Instant Challenges* so team can become familiar with them.
- Learn about Clarifications.
- Begin a "To Do" List.
- Use a calendar to list important dates (such as the Tournament).

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Attend organizational and informational meetings sponsored by your School/Organization Coordinator or Team Manager.
- Find out as much as you can about the Destination ImagiNation program. Ask your child's Team Manager for a copy of the *Team Challenge*, *Rules of the Road*, and *Team Manager Guide* and read them! The more you know, the more fun it will be for everyone in your family.
- Review the Interference Triangle and DI *Declaration of Independence* information in this Guide so you are familiar with the rules of Interference. Avoid talking about possible ideas or solutions for your child's *Team Challenge*. Remember to answer all questions with questions and **never offer ideas or solutions for the Team Challenge**.
- Respect your Team Manager's time investment with the team. Work with other parents to organize snacks for the team and create a carpool to and from the meetings. Pick up your child on time!
- Help your Team Manager create a meeting schedule that is convenient for everyone. Make sure you let the Team Manager know special events and vacations that you and your family have planned. Ask for a meeting calendar that includes scheduled meeting dates and possible meeting dates over holidays, school vacations and teacher in-service days.



Watch your child's creativity blossom after every Destination ImagiNation meeting. Let your child know how proud you are that he or she has made the commitment and is working with a team toward a common goal.

Stage 2: Generating and Incubating Ideas / Research / Inquiry

Your child's team will:

- Use the Challenge and *Rules of the Road* to understand the requirements.
- Generate ideas using the creative problem solving process.
- Use reference books, field trips, resource people, etc. to research possible Challenge ideas.
- Request Team Clarifications if they have questions.
- Work on: Performance skills, improvisational skills, creative use of materials.
- Acquire skills: Ask experts to teach them what they need to know in order to enhance their Challenge solution.
- Continue developing *Instant Challenge* skills: more practice under Tournament conditions. Try different types: Task-Based, Performance-Based, and Combination.
- Check the *Published Clarification* site.
- Check the *Rules of the Road* to be sure their ideas are within the rules.
- Think about how to integrate *Side Trips*.
- Look at Tournament forms.
- Collect receipts for materials for the *Expense Report*.
- Look at the calendar.

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Make sure you are not offering Interference to the team.
- Do fun and creative activities and games with your child to improve *Instant Challenge* problem solving skills. Play games like Pictionary®, Scattergories®, Outburst®, or make up your own improvisational games in which the whole family can have fun.
- Become involved with your child's team. Review the *Instant Challenge Practice Set* and try your hand at preparing and presenting a practice *Instant Challenge*. Offer to help drive the team on a field trip. Your Team Manager will appreciate the help, and it's fun!
- Volunteer to work with the team while the Team Manager attends a Team Manager Training.
- Do not allow your child to miss meetings. The team must work together to create the *Team Challenge* solution. The team depends on participation from each team member. Inform your Team Manager about unavoidable conflicts as soon as you know about them.

DI Tournaments are celebrations of creativity, teamwork and problem solving. It is a great day to invite family and friends.





Be sure to find an appropriate way to recognize the work of the team and Team Manager.

Stage 3: Focusing / Preparing for Action / Putting It All Together

Your child's team will:

- Use the creative problem solving process:
 - Building Acceptance
 - Developing Solutions
 - Focusing Options
 - Refining Solutions
- Learn skills needed after the team has narrowed options.
- Experiment with possibilities.
- Draft and refine scripts.
- Work on costumes.
- Work on props.
- Design and construct required elements and fine-tune as needed.
- Ask for Team Clarifications (if it is before the February 15th deadline) and continue to check *Published Clarifications*.
- Continue to be sure the solution follows the Challenge requirements and the *Rules of the Road*.
- Refine and integrate *Side Trips* into the Presentation.
- Continue practicing *Instant Challenges* under Tournament conditions.

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Make sure you are not offering Interference to the team.
- Help recruit Appraisers or other volunteers for the Tournament. Volunteer to help with the Tournament.
- Continue to provide snacks for the team and prepare and present *Instant Challenges*.
- Understand that Destination ImagiNation has been designed to allow your child to participate in every aspect of the solution and Presentation. However, in every team situation there will be differences of opinion. Have your child work out disagreements with the team and/or Team Manager on his/her own. This is a huge part of learning the creative problem solving process!
- Remember that the team may only have a total of seven members. If your child's team has seven members and one quits, that team member may not be replaced. That means that if your child quits just before the Tournament, the team could be left at a great disadvantage. Support your child's participation by standing behind the commitment – even when the team is in a slump!
- Watch your child's creativity blossom after every Destination ImagiNation meeting. Let your child know how proud you are that he or she has made the commitment and is working with a team toward a common goal.

Stage 4: Ready, Set, GO! Preparing for your Tournament

Your child's team will:

- Read the *TravelGuide for Teams* (available from the DI Web site at www.IDODI.org after January 1, 2011).
- Create a Tournament tool kit and emergency kit for Presentation items.
- Rehearse: Practice the timing of the set up, practice the timing of the entire solution.
- Identify a Prop Specialist who will assign responsibility for props.
- Identify a paperwork specialist who will fill out the paperwork.
- Continue to check *Published Clarifications*.
- Continue to be sure the solution follows the Challenge requirements and the *Rules of the Road*.
- Continue practicing *Instant Challenges* under Tournament conditions.
- Further refine and improve *Side Trips*.
- Showtime! Compete at the Tournament.

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Try to attend dress rehearsal performances, school performances, or other unscheduled team exhibitions to support the team. Be sure to go to your team's Tournament performance. Your child has worked hard for this opportunity to show off for you!
- Volunteer to help transport the team's props to the Tournament.
- Help provide snacks, lunch or other Tournament-day support.
- Understand that only one Team Manager can (with the team's approval) be in the *Instant Challenge* room.
- Do not ask your child for the specifics of their *Instant Challenge*. Because the same Challenges are used for all Regional or Affiliate Tournaments around the world, the Challenge they receive is a secret until after Global Finals.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship to your child and team. Do not discuss your team's solution with other parents or Appraisers unless you are the Team Manager.

Stage 5: Celebrate! Look How Far They Have Come on this Journey!

Your child's team will:

- Have a party after the Tournament to celebrate bringing this process to a conclusion.
- Share favorite memories of the funniest moments from the past weeks.
- Make a list of all the things they have learned that they did not know when they first met as a team.
- Write thank you notes to resource people who taught the team, Appraisers who represented the team at the Tournament, and other supportive people.

What Parents Can Do to Help

- Understand that it is the process, not the product that is important.** Review with your child all he or she has learned throughout the year. Celebrate their learning and growth at home.
- Help plan the team party to celebrate the process and the accomplishments of the team – **no matter where they placed at the Tournament.**
- Get together with the other team parents to find a way to recognize your team and Team Manager. Think of a creative way to thank your Team Manager.



The team's Solution is the team's alone. It is something that the team builds from their acquisition of skills and from their understanding of the Challenge and rules. It IS Interference for anyone not on the team to be in the team's Solution corner of the Triangle. Recognize and respect that the "top" is where team members reign!

Interference

The *Team Challenge* solution is owned and operated by the team! Only team members may contribute ideas and create the *Central Challenge* and *Side Trip* solutions. That means that parents, Team Managers, teachers, friends and anyone other than team members cannot contribute to the *Team Challenge*. Help from non-team members, including the Team Managers, is called "Interference." Make sure you understand Interference and sign the Interference Contract in the *Team Manager Guide*.

The Interference Triangle:

The Interference Triangle is a useful tool to help the team remember what Interference is and what Team Managers, parents and others can and cannot do to help the team.

The Base of the Triangle consists of two corners: Skills and Challenge & Rules.

These two corner support blocks are what teams have in common when they participate in the Destination ImagiNation program and process.

Skills are both those skills that the team members already know and bring to the team, and those skills team members learn while being a part of the team. Learning skills is an important and valuable part of the process of DI. Being in the program will someday end, but the skills the team members learned will continue throughout their lives. These skills include: performance skills, technical skills, thinking skills, team building, research, organizational, time management, budgeting and life skills, to name a few. It is not Interference for the team to be taught skills. In fact, it is the job of the Team Manager to facilitate the acquisition of skills. It is the job of the team to apply the learned skills to a particular purpose or use in creating the Challenge solution.

The Challenge & Rules are the printed Challenge, the *Rules of the Road* and Clarifications. The Challenge requirements and limitations and the rules in *Rules of the Road* are the facts by which all must abide. Understanding them and internalizing them is the job of the team, the Team Manager and the Officials. This is all learning that can and should be shared among teams, Team Managers and Officials. It is not Interference for the Team Manager to be sure the team understands the Challenge and the rules.

Sometimes skills determine which Challenge the team will choose. Sometimes the team chooses a Challenge and skills have to be learned in order to solve it. Regardless of which comes first, there is a back-and-forth of learning skills and understanding the Challenge that happens throughout the DI season.

The team's Solution is the team's alone. It is the Solution, the top part of the triangle, that everyone who is not a team member must not touch. The Solution is something that the team builds from their acquisition of skills and from their understanding of the Challenge and rules. It IS Interference for anyone not on the team to be in the team's Solution corner of the Triangle. Recognize and respect that the "top" is where team members reign!

Educational Goals and Challenges of Destination ImagiNation

The Educational Goals of the DI program are met through the two Components of the Program, the *Team* and *Instant Challenges*, by requiring teams to develop and learn many useful lifelong skills. The major difference between the two Components is not so much the nature of the Challenge itself but rather HOW MUCH TIME is available in which to craft a solution. The *Team Challenge*, developed over months, allows for greater depth and detail.

TEAM CHALLENGE	WHAT MUST TEAMS DO TO SOLVE THIS TYPE OF CHALLENGE?	INSTANT CHALLENGE
Yes	Develop creative problem solving techniques and use them in the creative process to produce novel and unique solutions	Yes
Yes	Develop the team's teamwork to a high degree; learn to collaborate effectively and cooperatively with a minimum of conflict	Yes
Yes	Learn improvisational techniques	Yes
Yes	Learn to analyze the properties of materials that might be available for a solution	Yes
Yes	Learn to use materials in ways other than their original purpose	Yes
Yes	Discover team members' collective interests, strengths, and abilities as a team and as individuals and showcase them effectively	Yes
Yes	Learn to read and understand the Challenge and make sure that the solution fulfills the requirements	Yes
Yes	Research and seek out information needed to solve the Challenge	Yes
Yes: Sustained time allowed, usually months, to prepare polished solution	Manage time effectively	Yes: Very short time allowed, only minutes, to prepare impromptu solution
Yes	Be able to think on their feet and improvise on the spot	Yes
Yes	Learn performance and theatrical techniques	Yes
Yes	Learn basic design and construction skills	Yes

New Resources



\$28.00



\$30.00



\$30.00

Schema Kit

**Keep your cards.
Complete the tasks.
Outlast your opponent.**

Schema was created by Destination ImagiNation, Inc. for players to experience creative problem solving. The mechanics of the game promote fun gameplay, discussion, creativity, teamwork, problem solving and reflection. And best of all, Schema was designed to be a different experience every time!

AscenDling

Make common *Instant Challenge* materials work for you.

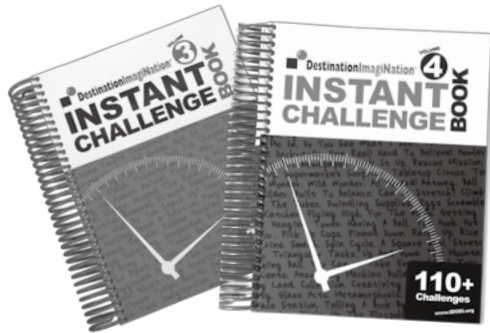
This series of Challenges is designed to introduce teams to common *Instant Challenge* materials, as well as encourage teams to discover useful and novel ways of using them. For each of the five materials selected, there are three tasks, each increasing in difficulty. In order to solve all three tasks, teams will need to push themselves to explore the properties of each material.

Dnamic Materials

Explore common *Instant Challenge* materials!

This kit is designed to teach, through experience, what can be done with common *Instant Challenge* materials. Through a series of questions and activities, teams will develop their own methods and techniques that can be used in many future *Instant Challenges*.

Available at ShopDI.org



\$40.00 each



\$30.00



\$25.00



\$30.00

Instant Challenge Books 3 & 4

Hungry for more *Instant Challenges*?

Whether you want a quick boost in creative energy or a chance to hone your *Instant Challenge* skills, *Instant Challenge Books Volumes 3 & 4* are the resources for you. These *Instant Challenges* are team tested, Tournament approved, and finally available in these great collections!

NO FUSS Backdrops

Ready? Set? Show!

NO FUSS Backdrops is an all-inclusive guide to building innovative set designs. This book contains detailed information to walk you through the process of building memorable backdrops, and it also includes hints, tips and other ideas to help you along the way.

Instant Challenge FLIP Book

Book of 4 Billion+ Possible Challenges

This book suggests hundreds of elements—including materials, settings, tasks, and much more—to help you practice *Instant Challenges* and further develop your creative problem solving skills.

Who's THAT?

Characterization Activity Kit

Who's THAT? is a brand new kit from Destination ImagiNation, Inc. designed to teach your team the basics of characterization. Why is characterization important? A basic understanding of characterization can improve your performances drastically by helping you make believable and round characters.